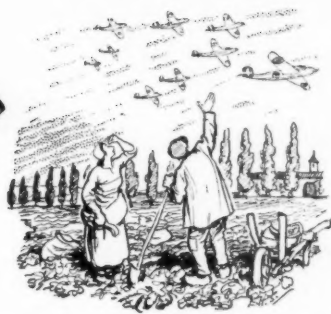




punch

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCI No. 5238

July 30 1941

Charivaria

"HITLER will attempt to swallow Italy," says a writer. A nice *hors-d'œuvre* on the menu is Sardinia.

"The Americans," we are told, "are trying to rid themselves of Isolation." A bargain; hardly been used at all.

Civilians in Holland and Belgium forbidden to wear ties of their national colours now wear no ties at all. This brings into greater prominence the V-shaped apertures of their waistcoats.



TENNYSON, we are told, used to talk to plants as if they could understand him. A correspondent says he recently heard his neighbour apostrophize his backward tomatoes in terms calculated to make them redden.

The main objective of the German armies on the Eastern Front is to catch up to where GOEBBELS says they are.

A scarlet runner is climbing up a London suburban lamp-post. We were convinced that ultimately a use would again be found for these things.

Bees, we are reminded, owe a lot to man. And the trouble starts when they begin to settle.



London experts are instructing the A.R.P. authorities in Moscow. Couldn't a return visit be arranged of Russian propaganda experts to the Ministry of Information?

Italian planes attempting to raid Gibraltar dropped bombs on a Spanish town forty-five miles distant. Spain thinks very little of Italian war aims.

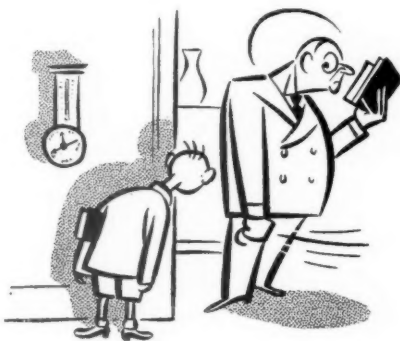
An American comedian has sent a selection of jokes to an English comedian. These will not be available to other English comedians until they are broadcast.

A neutral observer says that as a result of R.A.F. raids in Germany, hoardings appear like magic in damaged districts. In this country, hoardings appear like magic in War Weapons Weeks.

Over-Confidence

"SUNDAY, JULY 13TH—FOR SEVEN YEARS.
Clark Gable, Spencer Tracy
Claudette Colbert, Hedy Lamarr
BOOM TOWN (A)
full supporting programme."
Hereford Cinema Programme.

A film star has a sun-suit of white shark-skin. British lidos are more accustomed to those of blue goosflesh.



"GARDENING, &C.

Relax on a Camp Bed. 25s., carriage paid."—*Advt. in Northern Paper.*
But turn the hose off first.

A boy of eight has published his autobiography. There is an interesting chapter on Amusing Sayings of Parents.

Dishful Thinking

COUNT not me among the facile optimists. When the Nazi bombers return, as return they will, I think I know where my steel helmet has been hidden, and even my gas-mask after some hours of search may be rediscoverable. I have kept my eye on von Papen's machinations in Turkey. I have not been surprised by Vichy's ignominious surrender to Tokyo. No one has more often murmured than I have in select gatherings of thoughtful men: "Look out for Nobumasa Suetsugu." I have followed the swift weavings of Hideki Tojo's mind from the very start, and if a wriggler like Koshiro Oikawa has fancied he was eluding my rather hawk-like observation Koshiro Oikawa has been wrong.

You will have seen my forehead wrinkled also with thoughtfulness about priority claims and the various bottle-necks of production and distribution. In fact I know not any more reliable way of clinching an argument on any aspect of this great struggle than the simple words "It's just another of these bottle-necks." If I do not say it quickly enough every evening to the lift-porter as we run over the day's news together, he says it (not without an air of triumph) to me.

Often enough too I am bothered about the U.S.A. I have been told that if she decides to take an active part in these hostilities she will probably have to intern about ten million citizens. And that is a lot to intern. Even for a country whose film-police seem to have the powers of the Roman Praetorian Guard or the Spanish Inquisition, it is a lot to intern.

Yet I have quiet grounds for confidence, extending far beyond the smashing of German cities and the symbolic V tapped out on the air or chalked upon the trousers of the Gestapo. "Quiet grounds" is exactly the phrase that I needed, and I am glad that it tripped so easily off my pen. For the truth is that the real food supplies of this country are as yet entirely untapped. Untapped, unplucked, and unscythed. They lie, or run, or clamber all about us in the waste lands of the countryside, and if I had not happened to read a little book written by the Vicomte de Mauduit I should have known little or nothing about them.

The book is called *They Can't Ration These*. It has a foreword (not to say a preface) by none other than the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George (our last war's winner), and sentences from it run like a soothing refrain through all my anxieties about the Battle of the Atlantic and the difficulties I find in purchasing cigarettes without cork-tipped ends.

THE SQUIRREL

This is another great delicacy, the flesh of a squirrel being more tasty and tender than that of a chicken.

SQUIRREL'S TAIL SOUP

The tail, which is put aside after skinning, can be used with haricot beans, onions and herbs in making a delicious soup.

The word onion strikes rather a harsh note, but no matter. True it surely is that it will be a long time before Lord Woolton controls the distribution of squirrels, or the Rt. Hon. Gwilym Lloyd George sets a price upon their tails, which I must presume to be one of his father's favourite foods. In any case there is little need, if I may trust the Vicomte (and Frenchmen I do trust in matters of this kind), to be so carnivorous. There must be many who would not care for stewed starlings

or roast sparrows, both of which he recommends; many not averse to the edible frog to be found all over Norfolk and Cambridgeshire which has to be hunted and "caught in ponds, lakes and streams in the day-time by means of a red rag hooked to a line and after sun-down with a red lantern and a hand-net," and is "easily recognizable by the penetrating cwak brek-ex-ex croax croax which oftentimes can be heard a mile away"; still less averse to the edible snail which (though less noisy) is liable to be toxic and has to be starved before becoming suitable food. "This is done by covering the top of the shells with either cardboard or iron throughout the winter, thus keeping the snails in a state of slow life."

But consider

CARRAGEEN MOSS

Carrageen moss is a sea-weed common along the shores of Britain . . . It should be a splendid food for invalids as a spinach and for all as a salad. Carrageen also makes delicious blanc-mange.

Wherever carrageen moss-troopers are mustered let me be found with them at the cook-house door holding out my plate for a second helping of blanc-mange. Equally do I hanker for purslane and samphire salad, mentioned in this book, along with pickled broom-buds and beech-nut butter, with yarrow *purée* and slippery elm bark, with nettle-cake and bracken asparagus. The late Poet Laureate wrote a charming poem about "The Idle Flowers." For the Vicomte de Mauduit there would seem to be few of these or none. They are registered and waiting their turn to be called up; their heart is in the National Food Campaign. Not a quivering lurks in the hedgerows, not a defeatist in the remote thickets of the wood.

Or hardly any. When he says "Never touch the deadly nightshade (belladonna) berries, which can easily be recognized by their bright-black hue," when he warns me against yew and bryony, the author is giving me unneeded advice. He overestimates my esurience. But I am greatly moved by his disquisition on plain grass.

It seems that some time ago a Mr. Branson gave a broadcast lecture on Grass as a Food. I missed it but I believe no fault was found with its tone or matter by readers of *The Times* or even by the Beefsteak Club. The Vicomte de Mauduit pressed Mr. Branson to elaborate his views, and won from him the following remarkable statement:

"Eating beautiful fresh green grass, and beautiful fruit, and the petals of beautiful flowers are (sic) merely incentives which I suggest towards the expression of the ego in terms of beauty, of delicacy and of refinement."

I cannot help thinking that all those people who complain about eggs, about fish, about National or Wheatmeal bread, when half the gardens in London are full of uncut hay, are in reality playing Hitler's game. Or even Suetsugu's. The Minister of Agriculture has told us that we shall have more food in 1941 than we had in 1939. That is good. I praise him, and I praise Lord Woolton too. But it pleases also to think that if the war should last twelve or fifteen years there will yet be fir-cones to eat, and hair-grass, and couch-grass, fried agrimony, teasel puddings, coltsfoot jelly, young mice in trefoil, and delicate dodder and old man's beard.

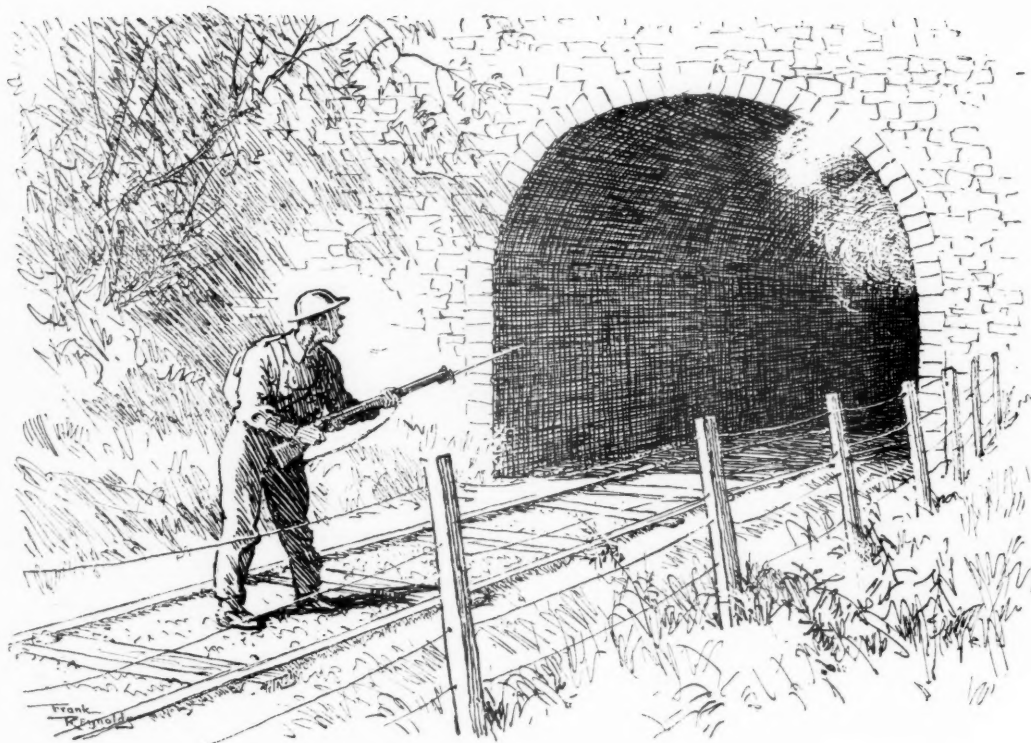
Nor shall good drink be lacking. The Vicomte has a few words to say in this book about the making of Red Beet Port Wine.

EVOE.



BRENDAN IN BLOOMSBURY

“‘Here, you may nurse it a bit if you like!’ the Duchess said to Alice.”



"Halt! Who goes there?"

Little Talks

I'M so sick of being told how good Goebbels is. I think he's pathetic. How d'you mean?

Well, take Hess. Or take the "V" sign. Here he is making frantic efforts to snaffle the "V" sign for himself—which can only make him look ridiculous. And all the time he had a superb retort to the whole thing, which might even have made us look ridiculous.

What's that?

D'you know what "V" means in the International Code?

Vichy.

No. There are certain single-letter signals in the International Code which all the ships and all the ports of all the nations know. "Y"—I am carrying mails. "P"—I am going to sea. "U"—You are standing into danger. "O"—Man overboard. And so on. Some of them you can send by sound as well as by flag and flash.

"V" is one of them. And "V" means—guess.

"No beer. No cigarettes"?

Very nearly. "V" means "I REQUIRE ASSISTANCE."

Lucky old Joe didn't know that.

Quite. Then he could have said "Look at these poor fools all over Europe, all madly tapping 'I require assistance.' So they do—and where's it coming from?" But the poor chump didn't know enough. Think what would have been said of our poor old Min. of In. if they'd missed an opportunity like that.

Is it nice to put Joe wise now?

Oh, yes. I was keeping it dark. But now the ass comes out and says that "V" means "Viktoria," and he can't very well go back on that.

And, by the way, how in the world can they go on punishing the Belgians and the Dutch for scribbling "V" on the walls now? All the Dutchman's got to say

is "Oh, but what I meant was 'V for Germany's Viktoria'—just as you said, Doctor Goebbels."

Quite. What an ass! What a bungler!

It could hardly have been done worse.

And then—what, after all, is the test of a propaganda merchant?

That he sells his goods.

Quite. Or rather, I should say that he makes people (a) like and (b) believe him. Can you think of any corner of the earth's surface in which the Nasties can claim that they are (a) liked or (b) believed?

Difficult, certainly. Well, I suppose there are a few remote insanitary spots where they are still liked, though I can't think of any at the moment. Japan? No. Not really. Spain? Not widely, I believe. Italy? Africa? America? No. The Snake-house? Vichy?

Anyhow, it's quite impossible to imagine a single corner of the earth

where anything they say is more likely to be believed than not. And that's a pretty black mark for Old Joe, surely. Think of it. Here's the whole human race, eagerly looking for news and information, and greedily gulping down whatever they can get. And every member of the said race, if he knows that a bit of news comes from Germany, says to himself as he swallows it, "It's probably a lie." It must be a record. We, at least, with all our well-advertised faults, are quite liked in a few places, and believed in a good many. And yet people go on saying how good Goebbels is!

He'd probably say he didn't want to be liked or believed; his aim is to frighten and confuse.

Yes, but, you ass, you can't even do that if nobody ever believes a word you say! Let me put it this way: Two years ago, if Goebbels had said "The Fuehrer will drench London with gas on September 15th," we should have all been rather alarmed—

And most of us would have believed it. But if he made the same statement to-day we shouldn't exactly laugh, but we should say "Well, it may or may not occur: but the fact that Goebbels has announced it makes it extremely unlikely"—shouldn't we?

True.

Well, in that case, you can't say that the man who's been in charge of Hun propaganda these two years has done a good job, can you?

I never did. But then I never do think that Huns are very clever. They're just thorough. And when they make a mistake they do that thoroughly.

Yes. People think Joe's clever because he splashes the paint about in quantities everywhere and hopes that some of it will hit the right spot. Then we come along with our careful little water-colours, and the fools say "How dull!"

I liked Beverley Baxter's remark in the House.

What was that?

Oh, they were talking about Hess or something, and someone, as usual, was wishing that the Ministry of Information would show "more imagination." Baxter interrupted and said: "Would the Honourable Member kindly inform the House what it is he wants the Ministry to imagine?"

What was it?

He hadn't the faintest idea.

Quite. Well, look at this "V" affair. It may be mere Voodoo—it may be "vishful thinking." But in the special circumstances of this particular war it might turn out tremendous. Anyhow, no one can say that we haven't handled it "imaginatively."

Brilliantly. Whereas old Goebbels has done one weak wriggle and flopped.

Quite. Of course, I think it's very easy to overdo the "psychological front." Buck up the captive countries, by all means; but I get awfully tired of all these articles and letters about "Why don't we hold out more carrots to the Huns?"

Carrots?

Well, the argument is: "There are only 3,000,000 members of the Nasty Party; and most of the other 77,000,000 Huns are really quite nice chaps—"

Yes, we've heard that before. They seem to keep on having wars, all the—

So we ought to say that we'll knock the Nasties endways after the war: but we must promise not to knock the nice 77,000,000 about.

But in that case we ought not to bomb them, surely, or shoot them with noisy guns? What's the idea?

The idea is that if we say we'll be frightfully nice to them after the war, they'll rise up and pull down Hitler.

I don't follow. Surely that will put them on a safe bet both ways. "If Germany wins," they'll say, "we're O.K.—"

Yes—and as Duff Cooper said, most of the nice Germans would prefer Germany to win.

—And if the Allies win they'll be nice to us: so why worry about pulling down Hitler—which would be a messy job, anyway?"

I agree. But then I'm not very keen

on the psychological front. I'm not sure that it would be a good thing if we did win the war by propaganda.

They say we did that last time.

Yes, and what happens? As soon as he's got his breath the Hun turns round and says it was all cheating. He was promised a lot of things he never got. And anyhow he was never really beaten.

I couldn't disagree with you less. I wouldn't promise him a thing.

He'll pull down Hitler because of bombs, not blarney.

Why do they keep talking about "Nazi" tanks, and "Fascist" bombers, and "Soviet" aircraft? You might just as well talk about our "Conservative" battleships or "National Government" infantry.

Yes. Or "Kingdom" battleships.

How?

Well, U.S.S.R. means "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" and U.K. means "United Kingdom." "Soviet" tanks — "Kingdom" cruisers: why not?

I suppose it's the sub-editor, really, looking for short words?

Partly that. And partly it's this same nonsense about no country being really represented by its rulers. I maintain, in my old-fashioned way, that Great Britain and Russia are fighting Germany and Italy: and the more we say that, the clearer everything will be.

It would be rather fun to have a "Parliamentary" submarine. A. P. H.



Economy, Salvage, Uncle Tom Cobby, Etc.

GIVING the name of Openstreague, a man charged at Gum Street with being a suspicious character said circumstances had been against him. He had just returned after living for twenty-one years in Portugal and was convinced that there was a continuous crackling noise going on that had not been in evidence when he was in the country last. This was enough to make anyone suspicious, though he had agreed with his friends that it must be the sound of the B.B.C. chewing over the news and putting adjectives into it. In passing sentence the magistrate, Mr. Groon, said he was sure we all agreed that in war-time the B.B.C. ought to make do with half as many adjectives; adding "Take him away."

Elsie and Ivy Glandular, two little girls of Shouting Upwards, have for the past sixteen months been saving hairs which they have cut from the tails of stray cats. In sending the collection, which is to be made into part of a Guardsman's bearskin, Mrs. Glandular writes: "It may be supposed that the cats raised some objection, but I know very well the dear pussies are only too delighted to feel that they are 'doing their bit,' as I call it." The little girls have announced their intention of "adopting" the Guardsman who wears the bearskin, and will undoubtedly write to him unless prevented.

One of the least defatigable and most conscientious savers in the country, Mr. Theophilus Aesophagus, used constantly to be asking himself "Am I saving enough?" It was pointed out to him that this was leading to chronic soreness of the throat and consequent over-expenditure on nostrums of one sort or another. He therefore had a small gramophone-record made, and invites a group of friends

in regularly to listen to it. Unfortunately, as the record merely says "Am I saving enough?" all who hear it, including Mr. Aesophagus himself, regard the question as of purely academic interest and make no personal application of it, so that nothing has come of the whole affair except that Mr. Aesophagus's gramophone, which he had been neglecting, is now less dusty (though more troublesome). Ah, well.

Noticing that people are more inclined to give to Spitfire Funds than to Tank Funds, Mr. A. J. Scandaroon of Ippleby has had a collecting-box made and labelled "Spitfire Fund" the money from which, by an ingenious device not a thousand miles away from the force of gravity, falls through the bottom into another box less noticeably marked "Tank Fund." This arrangement pleases everybody except people who want to give to a Tank Fund, and Mr. Scandaroon says "Where ignorance is bliss" (a meaningless phrase, but apparently a quotation).

A piano-tuner of Usher's Overcoat has perfected a machine for extracting the cut hairs from shaving-cream that has been used for shaving. "With the exercise of care and perseverance in retrieving the wiped-off cream from the blade of the razor, the diligent shaver may use it over and over again," says the piano-tuner, "God forbid." The fact that he himself has begun to grow a beard is due entirely to his inability to get any blades, either.

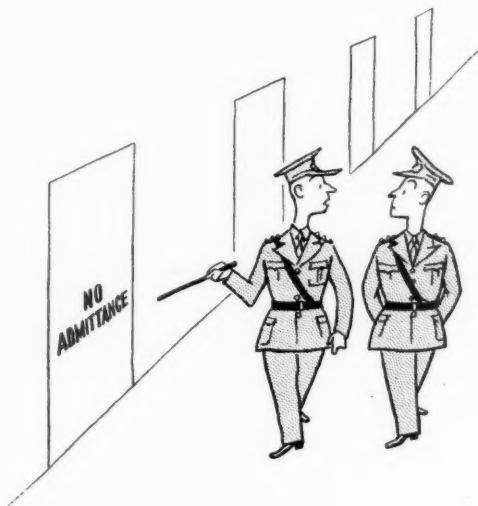
Mr. E. Chiffchaff writes: "I have noticed that all the pens in the South Coathanger post-office are unnecessarily broad in the nib. I calculate that the ink saved by substituting finer nibs would go far to rectify our unfavourable balance of trade with the Octopus Islands. What is the Government doing?"

For the past year and a half Mrs. Paintsplash, wife of a Grurping milkman, has made it a rule never to wash up saucers. With the money saved as a result of not having to heat so much washing-up water she recently sent a telegram to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the result of the War Weapons Week at Windblow Loudly. It was afterwards found that the amount saved in the Windblow Loudly War Weapons Week had been incorrectly calculated, but then so had the amount saved by Mrs. Paintsplash as a result of never washing up saucers.

A family of estate-agents at North Poal are reported to have filled a small fire-fighter's sandbag with the dust they have collected in the past eight months from the soles of their own and acquaintances' shoes. In announcing this news the Mayor of North Poal, Alderman Streakover, says: "I am sure it will be a lesson to us all to wipe our feet. I know it is a lesson to me to wipe mine."

The small fire-fighter's name is Harry.

(Uncle T. Cobby, mentioned in the title, has been omitted for reasons of economy.) R. M.



"... and that room, of course, is NEVER used."



White

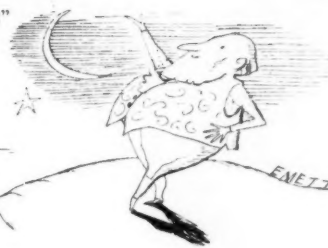
ONCE was a Miller, and he would say,
 "I go as white as lambs in May!
 I go as white as rose on bush!
 White as the white convolvulus!"

He snapped his fingers, began to sing,
 "White, by my beard, is everything!
 Meal, and chalk, and frost, and hail;
 Clouds and surf and ships in sail.

There's little on earth that brighter shines
 Than daisies, pinks and columbines;
 But mark *ME*, friends, when moon do
 show—

And mill and meadow are deep in snow!"

W. DE LA M.





"How many times do you have to refuse me before I'm a regular customer?"

Editorial Conference

THE Conference Room was also the school museum; with a stuffed bittern glaring over the typed notice pasted on its glass (*Presented by Sir H. Widley: Girls Must Ask the Science Mistress's Permission to Open Case*), and some grey sponges and a row of eggshells on cotton-wool. This morning the Magazine Editor, the Secretary and the Treasurer took their places at the table and, *Macbeth* being the Literary Society's play, the Treasurer said, "When shall we three meet again?" The Editor said, "After lunch." The Secretary stood up, said, "I hereby propose that the Minutes should be taken as read, I don't think," and sat down again. The Editor and the Treasurer said, "Hear, hear," the Treasurer said, "Here's the balance sheet if anyone wants to look and I've got both sides to match this time"; no one did, and that, as the Secretary said, was that.

"Now," said the Editor, and shook her satchel over the table.

"You are the *bun*, Vanessa," said the Secretary, "the

absolute sticky bun. *That's* where it was." She rescued her magnifying-glass from the heap of papers and polished it lovingly, while the Editor looked round the room and said, "Now, girls. Once bittern, twice shy."

"I say, that's not so dusty," said the Treasurer. "When did you think of it?"

"Just then," said the Editor. "That's why I'm Editor. Now, girls. *Owing* to the paper shortage, we can't have notices of Mr. Spofforth's lecture on 'Neath Tropic Skies' and the Chief Verger's talk on the 'History of the Chapter House,' with slides. Which shan't we have?"

"Both," said the Secretary. "Has anyone in the world got as many midge bites as I've got?"

"I have," said the Treasurer.

"I bet," said the Secretary.

"So do I," said the Treasurer. "I bet you haven't got as many as I've got."

"Now, look *here*," said the Editor. "My time's valuable."

"All right," said the Secretary. "But we don't have to finally decide till next term. *All* right, and I know it was a split infinitive. I did it on purpose."

"All I was going to say was," said the Editor, "that Daddy would have a fit. In the publishing world people decide on what they're going to publish *months*—"

"All right, Vanessa darling," said the Secretary. "Now go on. Let's do the Original Contributions. They're always such fun."

The Treasurer undid the girdle of her gym tunic. "So as I can laugh," she explained to the bittern. The Editor picked up another sheet of paper and began:

"See them whirling, twisting,
Flutt'ring slowly down,
See them vainly questing,
Red and gold and brown."

—That's only the first verse. And it's called 'Autumn Leaves.'

"You don't say," said the Secretary.

"And there were eleven more poems called 'Autumn Leaves,' but this scans best. Now, do we like it?"

There was a short silence.

"It does scan," said the Treasurer thoughtfully. "So far."

"It does all through," said the Editor promptly. "You can trust my ear. Empty stuff, of course, but good for a possible fill-up. I'll make a pile of Possibles here." She put the paper down and took up another and, clearing her throat, read out very fast:

"Long weeks we had wondered and watched it because
We saw it grow deeper, nor knew what it was.
At last 'tis completed, the concreting dries,
Our new Air-Raid Shelter lies under our eyes."

There's water laid on, and camp-beds in a line,
You'd think 'twas a palace, 'tis really so fine,
Though Jerry may grumble, we're in the earth's bowels,
Rememb'ring to take gas-masks, identity-cards, blankets,
pillows and towels.

So now when the warning goes, down we all go,
From danger to comfort and safety below,
And we thank all our Staff, and our Governors' kind
Finance Sub-Committee, who money did find."

There was another silence.

"It was commissioned," said the Editor. "It's by Catharine. Really, you'd think a Head Girl would have a better ear, wouldn't you?"

"What's wrong with it?" said the Secretary.

"Oh, nothing," said the Editor. "It's a fizzing poem. Perfectly fizzing."

"Don't be so superior," said the Treasurer.

"I'm not being so superior," said the Editor. "But there's a line that sticks out a mile, and if you can't see it

"Well, we *do* have to remember to take them," said the Secretary. "And what's more, that reminds me. I had to tell you we were to put in a notice saying about it, and to take our Silent Reading book as well."

"Oh, Lord!" said the Editor. "All right, we'll go the whole hog and shove that in too. '*Rememb'ring to take gas-masks, identity cards, our Silent Reading book, blankets, pillows and towels.*' How's that? It would save the notice."

"Jolly good," said the Treasurer.

"I think it is rather," said the Editor complacently. "It looks sort of meant now. I'll put that on the Definites." She laid the paper down and took up a bunch of several. "Ode to My Gas-Mask."

"No," said the Secretary and the Treasurer together, and the Secretary added, "Not again. The war's been on for six terms now."

"Well, I rather liked this one," said the Editor dreamily. "It has a *je ne sais quoi*."

"Vraimong?" said the Secretary.

"Vraimong. Mais, *actuellemong*, je pense le même que vous." She dropped the bunch on the floor and picked up another bunch. "Now guess who this is about. No prizes offered:

*'Deep in thy heart thou caredst for reformations,
Ponder'dst awhile, then wrotest "The Wealth of
Nations"——'*

There was a shout of "Adam Smith!"

"Clevvers. It goes on and on. And here's the next one. It begins:

'Great Adam Smith!'

and it goes on and on too."

"It's our History Special," said the Treasurer, who was only in the Middle Sixth, and had gone a bright pink, and was tying her girdle and untying it. "We——"

"Ruthie!" said the Secretary. "Was either of those yours?"

"No, here's hers," said the Editor. "It's signed *Nil Desperandum*, only anyone can tell Ruthie's fair hand, and I was saving it till the last."

"Give it to me," cried the Treasurer, and fell on the Editor. The Secretary fell on both of them.

"Ow!" cried the Editor. "Mind the glass, you saps! All right, Ruthie, I won't read your beastly poem."

The Editorial Conference sat down again, breathing deeply and tidying its hair. The Editor picked up the fragments of the History Specials. "We can join them together later. We need only print one. Now for the News of Old Girls."

There was a groan from the Secretary and the Treasurer.

"*M Bunting*," the Editor began, "*has given up her secretarial post and obtained another secretarial post. She has met B. Hinks for tea.*"

"A success story," said the Secretary, and the Treasurer giggled.

"Go on, Ed," said the Secretary.

"I've just remembered," said the Editor casually, turning over the papers. "There's one more little thing here——"

"That means you did it," said the Secretary.

"Well, what if I did?" said the Editor pinkly. "Editors are supposed to help fill the wretched mag."

"Let's hear it," said the Treasurer.

"It's more visual, really." The Editor laid it on the table:

"A STICK OF BOMBS

*bOmb bOmb bOmbbOmb bOmb
come"*

"You see," said the Editor, "it's after an American poet called E. E. Cummings. Who, as Daddy says, gets his main effects with those sudden capitals. You see how the capital *O* represents the sort of aural, or I should say mental, shape of the bombs, don't you?"

The Secretary and the Treasurer nodded uncomfortably. The Editor was always like this about her poems.

"And how two fall *together* in a sort of vehement lump, and then there's a kind of huddling climax——"

The Secretary and the Treasurer nodded again, in sticky embarrassment.

"If read aloud, it should, I think, sound like this." She cleared her throat.

A bell clanged along the corridor, and the Secretary and the Treasurer rushed gladly out. The Editor placed her poem reverently on the Definites, shovelled everything into her satchel, and followed them.

The Editorial Conference was over.

"The final impression, however, is that both this military might and solid civilian support for the Nazi regime rest on the bubble-like foundation of terrorism, deception, and self-delusion, so that when a break-up in Germany finally does begin it is expected cost £60."—*South African Paper*.

Very reasonable.





"It looks to me like one of last season's machine-gun nests."

Fade Out

I DOUBT if we shall meet again, Miss Sergison-Moffat,
When the guns have ceased firing, and the bomb-
racks are empty once more,
For I shall return, swift as the feathered arrow to
London,
And you will go back to your garden and the round hills
you adore.

The broad grey river that runs through your life will still
be there,
And there the broad grey pavements will be waiting,
please God, for me;
And neither of us will dare to part from them for an instant,
None will be quite so madly wildly jealous of their
loves as we.

You will forget me utterly, Miss Sergison-Moffat,
And yet, I think, you will pause every now and then and
turn your head;

The sight of a soup-urn or the bitter smell of moth-balls
Will conjure to your mind scenes you thought buried
deeper than the dead.

"H'm," you will say, snapping your fingers, "now what
was her name? . . .

Ethel, you remember, that woman who drove the big
American van?
She used to carry enormous parcels, *far* too heavy,
And had a husband in the Anti-Aircraft, such a nice
young man——"

And then, brushing the thought aside, you will turn back
again

To feast your gentle eyes on whatever happens to be in
flower,
For these heavy chains that yoke us together in war-time,
Will be light as thistledown on our shoulders in the
peaceful hour.

V. G.



WILL-O'-THE-WISP

"THEY ALSO SERVE"

THEY are brave, these people who, behind the scenes, whether at home or in the factories, go quietly about their essential tasks. Air-raids, nights in shelters, lost sleep, nerve strain, all is accepted cheerfully, for they are determined to carry on. Even when they are bombed and lose their homes and cherished possessions, their grateful appreciation of the help given them through the PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND acclaims the spirit which cannot be broken.

The privilege of service to them is extended to you. Will you help us supply their most urgent needs? If you have helped us with contributions before will you please help us again? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber? Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



"Sumbathing, eh?"

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, July 22nd.—House of Lords: More Talk of Many Things.

House of Commons: An American Loan is Announced; A Statement on India.

Wednesday, July 23rd.—House of Commons: Regulation 18b and All That.

Thursday, July 24th.—House of Commons: A Debate on Food Production and Distribution.

Friday, July 25th.—House of Commons: U.S.A. Loan Bill, All Stages.

Tuesday, July 22nd.—The hero of the hour in the House of Commons is not a Member, but one of those Men-Behind-the-Scenes who make life run smoothly even for our Great Ones.

For years Members and visitors alike have strained their ears to hear what is going on. Success has ebbed and flowed; sometimes there have been periods of comparative intelligibility—sometimes the opposite. Recently, as your scribe reported, a cloak of complete inaudibility descended abruptly on many Ministers.



THE VOICE OF THE THURTLE

"The Ministry is fully sympathetic to the 'V' campaign."—*The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Information.*

Life in the Commons became one long secret session.

Then the magician acted. His official title is much less romantic: Clerk of Works of the House of Commons. But Mr. J. E. HOLMAN

performed a remarkable piece of magic—he made the dumb to speak, the mumblers (somewhat cavernously) audible. It was all so simple, the way he did it.

He just put up near the ceiling a sloping, almost invisible, board which magnified the voices and made it possible for your scribe to know, with relative and only slightly qualified certainty, just what *had* been said. There is still room for improvement; but on behalf of himself and his fellow-scribes (not to mention the 615 M.P.s and the Great British Public) your present scribe tenders his grateful thanks to Mr. HOLMAN, Clerk of Good Works.

It is a pity that, on the first day of the New Hearing Order, there was so little to hear. Even Miss WARD (whose own clothes-coupons must be exhausted already, so kaleidoscopic is her wardrobe) could not raise much of a cheer with a demand for coupons for Service women, so that they might have attractive "civvies" when on leave. Sir ANDREW DUNCAN, President of the Board of Trade, said the supply position would not stand the strain.

Then Miss WARD wanted from the same Minister a definition of a "girl." Cautious, courteous Sir ANDREW was not being drawn, in spite of encouraging cries from those around him.

Captain JOHN DUGDALE, who is a very young Member (and, one would think, an even younger officer), wanted paper restricted in the Army. Captain DAVID MARGESSON, the War Minister, looked pained at so revolutionary and well-nigh blasphemous a suggestion. "An Army without forms and returns?" he seemed to say. "Dear, dear, tut-tut, and dammit, Sir! Country's going to the dogs!" Then, with the air of one who makes a great concession, he said forms were being made smaller (not fewer) and their number kept under constant review.

General Sir ALFRED KNOX, who has a taste for things statistical, announced that 1,141 Army Council Instructions had been issued this year. They stifled the Army, he said.

Mr. ERNEST THURTLE made a successful debut as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Information, coining the neat phrase that the "V" campaign was a "sort of 'Lift up your hearts' movement for the Nazi-oppressed countries."

Then Lord WINTERTON had his customary row. He asked a private notice question about India, and was pulled up by Mr. GORDON MACDONALD, who complained that the very next question (his own), already on the Order Paper, related to that topic,

making a private notice question unnecessary.

Lord WINTERTON promptly blew the gaff on a polite Parliamentary fiction by announcing that the Minister had



IN THE ASCENDANT
SIR ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR

asked him to ask the question, and retired to his seat in a huff. When Mr. AMERY, India Secretary, had announced some administrative changes in the government of India, the Noble Lord, amid laughter and ironical cheers, apologized to Mr. MACDONALD, vindicated the Parliamentary proprieties, and retired again, looking even more hurt.

The House cheered popular Colonel HARVIE WATT, newly-appointed Parliamentary Private Secretary to the PRIME MINISTER, who to-day exchanged the khaki of an Anti-Aircraft Brigade Commander for the black of a Ministerial A.D.C. Members also cheered Major GWILYM LLOYD GEORGE, now a "Right Honourable," like his famous sire.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER announced that the United States were to make Britain a loan of £106,000,000 to help our war effort. A crash of cheers greeted the news.

The Lords had an astonishing collection of business. It ranged from Colonial War Risks, through post-war reconstruction, to the reform of the Diplomatic Service.

Ministers sat on the Front Bench until their questions were dealt with, then, folding their papers like Civil



"Ten thousand pardons, Sire, but the regulations say stewed lampreys OR grilled dragon steak."

Servants, they as silently stole away. This Ten Little Nigger Boys act was copied by other Peers, with the laudable result that the speeches too grew beautifully shorter as Time Marched On.

Wednesday, July 23rd. — Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN, new Minister of Information and man of surprises, easily defeated Mr. HOLMAN at his first attempt. Making his bow in Ministerial office, Mr. BRACKEN spoke so softly that even those sitting by him were left wondering what words of wisdom were falling from him. Perhaps it was stage-fright, which will pass.

Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, Air Minister, made another of his rare personal appearances, only to have the mortification of finding that two of his five would-be questioners were absent. They had probably not dared to hope for so signal a distinction as an answer from the Minister himself.

Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, First Lord of the Admiralty, the other near-permanent absentee from the Treasury Bench, stayed away, leaving his able lieutenant, Sir VICTOR WARRENDER,

to hold quite a number of loudly-howling babies thrust upon him by peevish Members. With tact, he succeeded in quietening most of them.

Sir VICTOR mentioned, *inter alia*, that only 2½ per cent. of the "Wrens" wanted women doctors to attend them. This seemed to give Drs. Sir HENRY MORRIS-JONES and Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE some pleasure.

Then Mr. ATTLEE resolved the House once more into its semi-chronic state of secret session, after which, in public, there were acidulated discussions on Defence Regulation 18b, war damage to land in Scotland, and all sorts of other things.

Thursday, July 24th. — Food production and distribution was the absorbing subject of to-day's debate, and although several Members of the Treasury Bench made movements (from sheer force of habit) as if to bring down the curtain of secrecy, it remained in public.

The result was an interesting discussion on that most vital of all "Fronts"—the Food Front. On the whole, the situation is reassuring if

we are careful and realize that all the time danger lies around the corner.

Friday, July 25th. — The Bill to give effect to the necessary formalities on the United States loan to Britain was passed, with truly Transatlantic celerity, through all its stages. A golden link, this time, in the immensely strong chain that binds Britain and the cousin States.

o o

"It will be appreciated that the success of the scheme depends to a large extent on the goodwill displayed by both sides."

Extract from Fire-Fighting Instructions to Southern Railway Staff.

We appreciate that, but does the fire?

o o

"Mr. Law assured the assembled senior officers that the War Office had never taken a light-hearted view of the Home Guard, which, in common with the Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, had always been regarded with the utmost seriousness."

Daily Paper.

They laugh at everybody else.

"V"

THERE was a long lake there.
The deer came down to drink,
Stepping the heather with little
delicate feet,

The grey stags stamping, the small does
Very round and liquid of eye, very neat,
With soft nuzzling nose.

And, I think,
The eagle was no stranger to that air;
Though no man knows
The dark and dizzy climb to his retreat,
I think his shadow-span
Skimmed the dark waters there,
And the wind of his wings
Bowed the bulrushes and shivered in
the grass.

I never saw him pass,
But from those black eyes fear leapt
sudden,

Unknown, unbidden,
Fear gazed at me from those wild
lovely things

The gentle deer:
And then there was no shadow on the
lake.

This is more real than wars:
It is of the mind now, something
stored away

Against these times that once will be
forgotten,

A hope now for the heart.
Like the impermanent stars
That spin their circle and return their
light,

So this far other life, this day
That lived, and like a pattern
Recalls its first device
And all the joy of it, part upon part
In bold intricacies:

So this loved day, in all its aching peace,
Will blossom, oh, it will break
At last upon my sight.

o o

I Schpy!

Herr Nasenparke lectures Fifth
Columnists on Sabotage.

WHEN next-but-one to engineer-
ing, of all sorts, in motion, cast
many spanners at the pistons,
thinking to harass the continuity, with
upsetting the industrials.

Stalk the bigger gasmeter under-
takements with tinder, placing sparks
around the store of vapour, but not
awakening the sentinels, of course,

o no! lest your glims be doused before
a great deal of the whole thing is
ensparkled.

Without a ticket, be passengers on
explosion trains and deter them from
their course by tugging the link of
alarums and excursions, even though
perhap it should mean ponishment in
five pounds, for such a kosting would
be rewarded you. And when you leave,
place in the lavabo a charge of delayed
action, to bang when you are at a
safer distance than that, o yes!

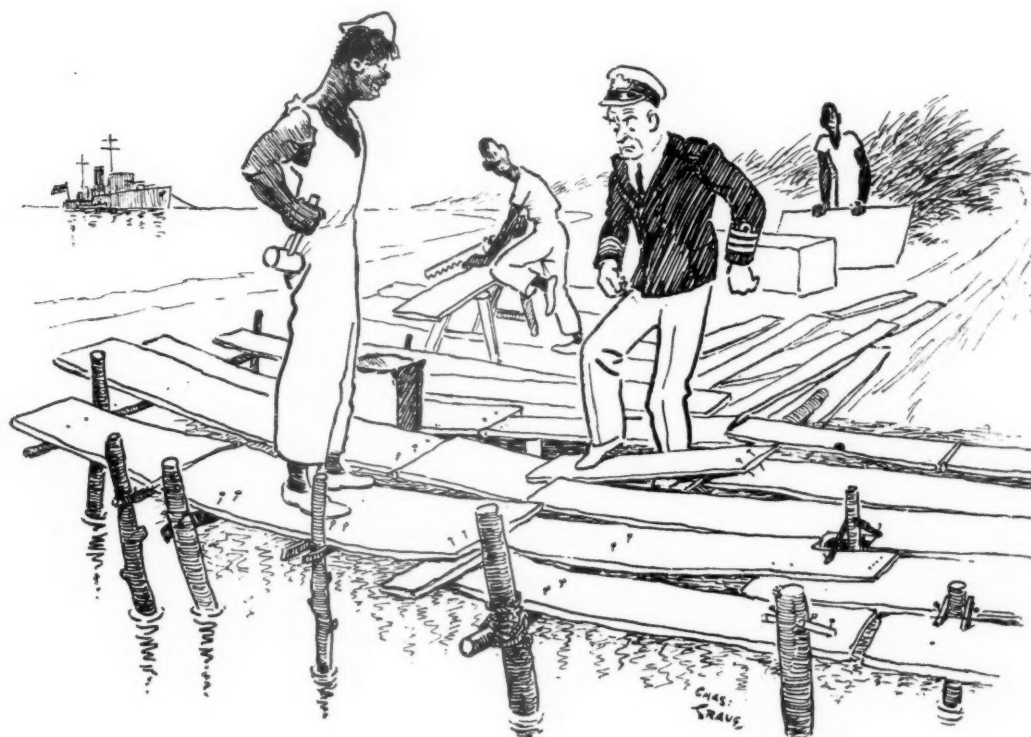
Trip up motor haulage by means of
unsawing tree-trunkings and spreading
them about the King's high street
several times a night.

Enter the bomber command, to
tamper with the mechanicals, pocket-
ing the ignition of the larger aeronauts
so that they are unstarted.

Snip elektriks when you see them in
robust lines, climbing the pylonsposts
hand in hand to saw away merrily,
thus upsetting big currents of potential
and bringing motors to a stoppidge in
the darking.

Do all this and you will receive a
decorative from the Fuehrer, if you are
returnable, what I hope so, of course.

Dis-schmiss!



"It don't need to be fixed, Sab. It's only for de duration."

At the Revue

THE NEW AMBASSADORS REVUE (AMBASSADORS)

MODERN revues beat even the "Jacobethan" drama in multiplicity of authorship. In this case there are, as the scholars say, "many hands"; but whereas Jacobethan writers modestly forgot to claim their own shares, thus giving our scholars abundance of opportunity for learned wrangling over the various "hands," the moderns are not so modest. We know what is whose and can decide in this case that the neatest "hands" are those of Mr. NICHOLAS PHIPPS in the lyrics and of Mr. ABADY in the melodies. Between them all, the authors and composers have turned out no fewer than thirty-four items. "There's richness for you," as Mr. *Squeers* said of another matter.

It has been alleged, with doubtful veracity, that fifty million people can't be wrong: by the same argument a revue of thirty-four items cannot be all bad. It is also unlikely, on this reasoning, that all the items will be Grade A. Nor, indeed, are they—that is if you deem originality to be an essential constituent of the premier class. But we need not blame the poor authors; the simple truth is that there are certainly not thirty-four new jokes or tunes available. So if we yawn a little, we do it in an uncensorious way when singers of folk-songs, tweedy and intense, are mocked once more, and the belle of the Victorian bucks yet again pours champagne into her shoe. Red Cross peeresses for whom service means life *in camera*, the absurdities of opera, and the Oriental colonel are all fairly old friends, but some good tunes can still be played with the old fiddlesticks, and there is freshness of treatment especially in the presentation of opera.

Miss JOAN SWINSTEAD has a victorious ditty on the handling of toothpaste, and that surely is a theme hitherto unseized by the rapacious hands of the revue-author. Mr. ERNEST THESIGER and Mr. CHARLES HAWTREY engage in a racy duet as a pair of fire-side and fire-breathing

dowagers about to consume the invader with the flame of their patriotism and the murderous cunning of their new-fangled weapons. Miss MADGE ELLIOTT gives a very sharp edge to some portraiture of unpleasant ladies.

Amid the louder pleasures is the gentler voice of Miss BETTY ANN DAVIES. If you remember how moving she was as the over-tasked schoolgirl, struggling with the capes and rivers of England, in a recent revue of Mr. FARJEON's, you will imagine with what a natural and stirring pathos she delivers a song of sadness about a girl

chopping with inadequate weapons, amateur plumbing, erecting tents and camp-beds for new and unwanted arrivals, and the preparation of foods and conserves which could be obtained better and cheaper ready-made in the town. Thus did they relax.

Miss ESTHER MCCrackEN, the authoress of *Quiet Wedding*, and now of *Quiet Week-end*, knows all about that relentless devotion to the tranquil countryside. Her *Royd* family go tearing into all the ardours and endurances of a rural week-end. Her plot is a trifle, and some of her fun is of a very familiar

kind. There is a sublimely obtuse and inarticulate bachelor who has to be pushed into a proposal of marriage and propelled also into a poaching expedition which leads on to a ducking in the river and a sad dilemma for the Bench. In short, there is a plentiful allowance of simple fun supplied by a dramatist who knows all the *Royd* jokes and the *Royd* types, and supplies an admirable entertainment for an audience of *Royds* who will love to see themselves as Miss McCrackEN so genially sees them.

The serious-minded student of Drama may aver that this is superficial, and that the great heart of Roydism deserves more penetrating analysis. But Miss McCrackEN seems to be more interested in people who like going to plays than in people who like staying at home to write theses on drama. Perhaps if *Quiet Week-end* were translated

into Russian and then translated back into English with the Russian names left in, it would seem far more profound. Meanwhile we can watch Miss MARJORIE FIELDING arranging a cottage menu and Mr. FRANK CELLIER plunging solemnly into poaching, courtship, and water—hot and cold.

Mr. CELLIER's performance is a model of dry comedy. The basis of the fun may be elementary, but the execution of it is full of the subtlest artistry. Miss FIELDING makes every point of her domestic afflictions tell. Miss DOROTHY BATLEY is a superb lady of the village, forever organizing bigger and worse concerts, and Miss JEANNE STUART handsomely intervenes as an exotic crasher of the rural gate. Miss GLYNIS JOHNS, as a juvenile member of the *Royds'* party, oddly manages to look no less exotic. I. B.



LET 'EM COME!

MR. ERNEST THESIGER AND MR. CHARLES HAWTREY

pawning her ring. This episode, a violet among the orchids, is exquisite. I. B.

At the Play

"QUIET WEEK-END" (WYNDHAM'S)

THE English, as we know, had, in happier times, a curious habit of going "hell for leisure." In order to secure repose the members of the middle-class would acquire cottages containing every ancient inconvenience and thither would assiduously travel on Friday night or Saturday, usually in the pelting rain. Arrived, they would apply themselves to a furious week-end of washing-up, with some no less exacting side-lines in the way of airing damp bedding at reluctant fires, wood-

Reading and the Like

"READING and the like is important," said the ship chandler's runner. "Alf the success I've 'ad I put down to 'aving always been fond of reading. You'd 'ardly credit it, but often when I'm walking along the road thinking of nothing in partickler I find myself reading the bus-signs for pleasure. It comes almost automatic, you might say."

"Of course a lot of my reading 'as to do with the trade, but I don't 'old with being narrer. Some men in my position would think catalogues was enough, but there's lots of things 'andy to know what don't ever get into catalogues. It's breadth of reading that counts. They laugh at me sometimes reading the *'Ardware Trades Journal*, what doesn't mention the ships' store trade 'ardly from one year's end to the next, but many's the time I've found something 'elpful in it."

"The other day the missus gave me a story book which she said was all about ships' stores. It's funny, but you don't often 'ave ships' store merchants coming into stories. By what I can see of the books at 'ome story-writers mostly write about factories, there being more girls there."

"Any'ow, this book was disappointing. It wasn't about real ship-storing at all. It didn't even mention the stock, which is the most important thing about a business like ours and the only thing you can judge by. It wasn't true to life, either. It was about a firm of ship-chandlers that had a waterside ware'ouse Wapping way where they'd fixed up a chute into the river that you could drop bodies down. Well, I know the river from end to end and I know there ain't a firm in the trade that would do such a thing. They'd be insulted if you was to suggest it—most of them."

"Where this story-writer must 'ave got mixed up is with some of them small old-fashioned firms that call theirselves ships' store merchants without 'olding 'ardly any stock or 'aving any connection to speak of. Some of them's liable to jump if you speak to them sudden, but that's because they've 'ad a 'ard life. And they're not nearly so bad as they look."

"But, coming back to serious reading for knowledge, you 'ave to do it nowadays to keep up with all the new rules the Government's bringing

out. What with Limitation of Supplies and coupons and new life-saving regulations and Ships' Store Control, you spend 'alf your time reading rules and then arguing with the officials about what they mean."

"You take the other week. I was 'elping out in the office and they put me with the chap that'd come from the Customs to check the books for Purchase Tax—partly to 'elp 'im and partly because the chief clerk will 'ave it that that's where all the pencils go."

"'Ere!' 'e ses to me, "'Ere's a diver's 'elmet what you ain't charged Purchase Tax on. A 'elmet's a 'at, and 'ats is liable."

"'Well,' I ses, 'a diver's 'elmet ain't 'ardly a 'at, not in an ordinary manner of speaking. It's more like what you'd call 'eadgear."

"'Ar, but that don't get you out of it,' 'e ses, 'because 'eadgear is 'ats too, and liable. It ses so distinct in a special section of this 'ere booklet."

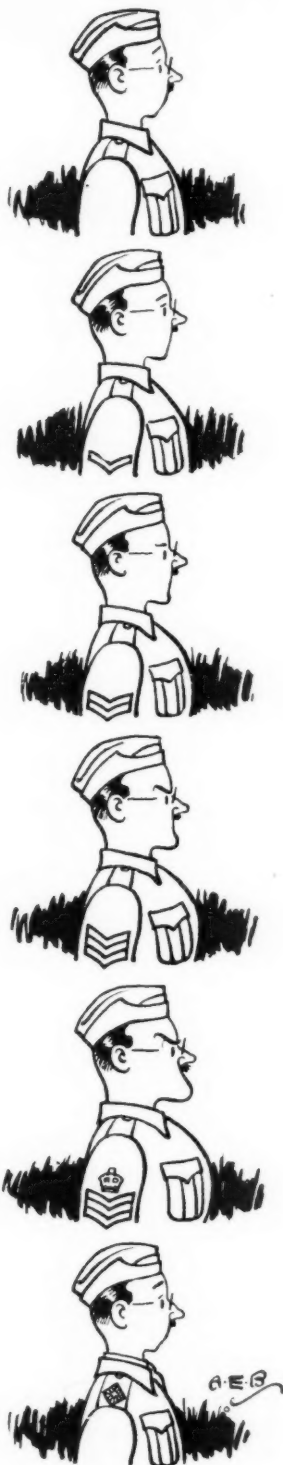
"'Any'ow,' I ses, 'a diver's 'elmet goes right over the 'ead on to the shoulders. 'Ats didn't ought to come past the ears, not if they fit right."

"'It don't say nothing about size in this 'ere schedule,' 'e ses, 'and I don't know as that don't turn it into a kind of collar, which would make it liable again. Any'ow, you can't 'ardly expect the Customs to agree with an argument like that. Suppose everyone could get out of paying Purchase Tax by wearing 'ats five or six sizes too big for them. Where would the Revenue be then?"

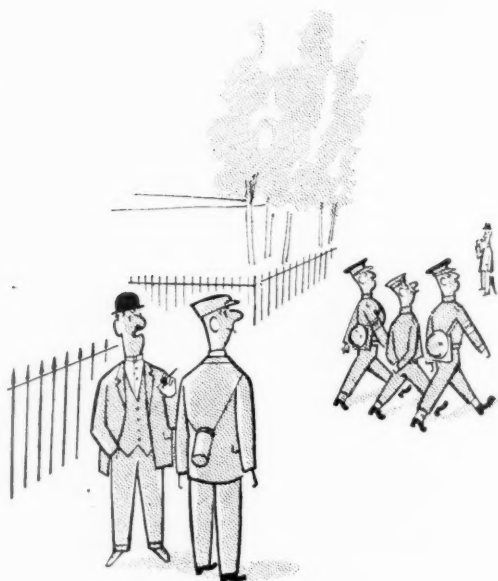
"'Ere's where I 'ad the advantage of 'aving read a lot about this Purchase Tax. I said that, thinking it over, maybe it wasn't 'eadgear, but in that case, 'aving glass in it, it'd be spectacles and exempt according. 'E was so took with my 'aving such a command of the subject, as you might say, that at last 'e said 'e'd put it up to 'is boss and see what 'e could do for us. Five or six weeks later 'e come into the office again."

"'I got a special ruling from 'Ead-quarters about that diver's 'elmet of yours,' 'e ses. 'It's a 'at, all right; but we're making it a concession that all 'ats weighing more than forty-eight pounds, if not trimmed in any way, is to be exempt, so that lets your 'elmet out of it."

"'Thank you very much,' I ses. 'I only 'ope it won't be took unfair advantage of.'"
A. M. C.



PROMOTION



"They asked 'im where 'is helmet and respirator was, and 'e looks 'em straight in the eye and says 'e's wearing 'em."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

"The Duster" in War

IN NELSON'S day the Red Ensign was a fighting flag which distinguished the ships of war under the command of many of Britain's most famous admirals. To-day its descendant—called by those who sail under it by a variety of affectionately disrespectful names, of which "the Duster" is the politest—is no less in the forefront of sea warfare, although it is flown only by the hundred-and-one types of craft, from the liner to the tug, which make up the merchant fleet of Britain. Sir ARCHIBALD HURD's all-too-brief study of the history of the merchant seaman in war, which he calls *The Battle of the Seas—The Fighting Merchantman* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 3/6), calls to mind the fact that the mercantile marine has its own warlike tradition, going back in fact even further than that of the Royal Navy, and he instances a number of episodes of the Napoleonic Wars and earlier in which its fighting spirit was proved. It has, however, been left to our own times to provide the Red Ensign with its highest battle honours—how magnificently won, and in face of how great suffering and endurance, these pages eloquently yet simply set forth. At a time when air power looms so large in the popular mind, it is well that an island people should be reminded of the less spectacular heroism of its seamen, and

of the fact that the time is not yet come, if indeed come it must, when the aeroplane, in war or peace, can take the place of the ship as the main medium of oversea trade.

Nazi Pedigree

When LUTHER, says Mr. ROHAN D' O. BUTLER, unleashed Germany from the extraneous discipline of Christendom, the German relapse into savagery was so swift that LUTHER himself helped set up the omnipotent state in order to quell it. By the sixteenth century every ruler was choosing his subject's religion for him; but blind obedience never irked the mass of the Germans—they liked it; and the connection between the pleasant individual German and the fiendish excesses of his "folk" is the individual German's distinctive outlook on society. He has, as SPENGLER maintained, an "unbounded necessity to serve. . . no 'cause,' no leader, no caricature of one even," need lack a following. And it is the remarkable consistency of the philosophies behind these causes, these leaders and these caricatures of leaders that Mr. BUTLER has so brilliantly traced in *The Roots of National Socialism, 1783-1933* (FABER, 12/6). It is—perhaps unfortunately—no part of his business to give the devil his due: to emphasize, for instance, what ethical justification there was (and is) for the "closed commercial state" that FICHTE, in 1800, so amazingly advocated. But German philosophers and their disciples have gone a long way downhill since FICHTE.

Chinese Achievement

Neither the jacket nor the title-page of *China Shall Rise Again* (HURST AND BLACKETT, 12/6) prepare you for the fact that Mme. CHIANG KAI-SHEK is not wholly responsible for an extremely interesting feat of collaboration. She is responsible for its first and last sections—a series of impromptu exhortations to the Chinese people and a more closely knit account of Chinese achievement—for the benefit of the rest of the democratic world: coupled, this last, with a sufficiently caustic reminder of how "British appeasement, American profiteering and French fear" have imperilled not only Chinese security but our own.



"Can you read the top letters on the chart?"
"What chart?"

In between these (as it were) open letters is an admirable series of articles by the ten Ministers concerned on Finance, Strategy, Foreign Relations, the Industrialization of Western China, Communications, Education, National Health, Army Medical Services, Red Cross and Industrial Co-operation. All recount marvels of improvisation, the palm going to the Minister of Communications, whose sphere embraces camels, yaks, coolies with bamboo carrying-poles, and Douglas planes. The average citizen will find plenty to learn from these indomitable people. "We should sweat," they say, "when our brothers give their blood for us. To give sweat is easier than to give blood."

Insomnambulism

Biographer of the heroes and champion of the lesser peoples of South Africa, SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN in her latest study—*The Night is Long* (FABER, 15/-)—challenges her readers to a yawn by basing the story of her own life on her persistent insomnia. She has been entertained by Mrs. ROOSEVELT in America and by Mme. LITVINOV in Russia, has argued with famous authors, come courageously to grief on a lecture-tour that never started, and even speculated a little in the middle of a New York slump; but always the story of her best-sellers and her travels and her philosophy brings her back in the closing circle of a jungle-lost traveller to the weariness of sleepless nights. Except perhaps that this preoccupation with unrest tends to a state of mind sympathetic to her tired disillusionment with a world out of joint, it has nothing to commend it to a reader. It suggests drugs, nightmares, inferiority complexes, and rather reduces the force of Mrs. MILLIN's concern for all oppressed races and her urgent hatred, from the standpoint of the Jews, of all the works of Nazi Germany. On the other hand, her not less constant home-coming in thought to the banks of the Vaal, where helpless little Hottentots and half-whites persevere in what is surely the humblest existence on earth, gives to this volume pathos and humour and a sense of the immense diversity of human experience.

Tricks of a Trade

As her publishers say, the controversial aspect of Miss MARGARET LANE's new novel, *Walk Into My Parlour* (HEINEMANN, 9/6), is only incidental to its purpose, which is to tell a story. All the same, though the author makes her "heroine" understandable and pathetic, she never makes her likeable. And even though the story, beginning in 1891, ends in 1939 before the beginning of this war, it contains (read it as you will) timely hints about the charlatans who grow fat on human suffering while protesting that miracles (even sleight-of-hand ones) confirm faith. It would be difficult to find a more unpleasant child than poor little *Emma Shardiloe*, the plain younger sister of pretty *Lily*, who had plenty of parlour-tricks. *Emma* was



Seaside Landlady (to visitors who have just taken her apartments).
"AND IF THERE SHOULD BE AN AIR RAID I'VE A BEAUTIFUL CELLAR.
BUT OF COURSE IT WOULD BE AN EXTRA."

C. Harrison, August 4th, 1915

naturally telepathic and, as she had the good luck to be dexterous too and to make friends with a conjurer, it was easy to scare the household. Later she became friendly with a medium and married a doctor. It is not a happy story but it is a brilliant psychological study of a mean mind's groping for power, and Miss LANE is to be congratulated on her handling of a self-humbugging character. The book is worth reading whether one likes it or not.

Ration-Book Queries

SOMETIMES we're bidden
To write in BLOCK LETTERS,
Sometimes we're left
To do as we please;
Is there some subtle
Inscrutable reason,
Or merely a childish
Desire to tease?

The surname sometimes
Has a line to itself,
While sometimes it hasn't:
Oh, tell me, I pray,
Has far-seeing wisdom
Dictated this policy,
Or merely high spirits—
Can anyone say? A. W. B.



"Well, here's the last of the January jobs, Fred—No. 91 Church Street—burst pipe."

Times Aren't What They Were.

ONCE upon a time, and it soon won't be as often as that, there was a landowner. He had—besides his land—three daughters, which was particularly bad luck as he had had two wives and naturally would have liked an heir to the overdraft and the mortgages. But no—he had these two elder daughters, rather termagants, and the youngest one—called Cinderella.

One day, or, more accurately, one night, the officers billeted in the neighbourhood threw a sherry party and invited the whole of the landowner's family—not of course counting those members of it who never do

get counted, such as the father and mother.

It was Cinderella's fate to remain at home since somebody had to because it was the maid's evening out, just as it always was.

She sat rather crossly over the electric fire and thought how, in happier times, she could have eaten nut-milk chocolate and read a nice story, whereas now there was practically nothing to eat within reach except fifteen tins of sliced carrots, and nothing to read except such books as *European Gangrene* and *Gangrene in Europe*.

Presently, however, her godmother called in on her way from various

queues and Cinderella immediately told her how *definitely* lousy everything was and that she definitely hadn't anything fit to put on, and anyway her sisters were so definitely selfish that they'd said they couldn't possibly all three go to this party.

The godmother reacted almost exactly as Cinderella had meant and expected her to react. That is to say, she offered to help.

Actually, Cinderella said, it's a question of coupons, actually.

The godmother didn't seem to want to part with any coupons, much, but she was full of suggestions—all of them a bit synthetic.

A good deal, she said, could be got from the haberdashery counter—which was coupon-free—and as for a frock, she herself could find old Aunt Mabel's wedding-dress put away in camphor in the attic, and it wouldn't be much trouble to cut it up and reorganize it.

Cinderella showed a certain amount of anti-enthusiasm, saying that even if she could find the scissors, which she was far from being sure about, there still remained the difficulty of stockings—let alone shoes.

The godmother said at once that Cinderella must either wear no stockings at all, or darned ones—which would not only show her to be patriotic but domesticated as well. And some kinds of shoes could be bought without any coupons at all.

Both Cinderella and the godmother were a bit vague as to the regulations, but by pooling their information they made out that one could get beach-shoes—not made of rubber, and showing not more than an inch of any colour except red, blue, green, yellow, violet, or brown, with heels under one-eighth of an inch, and above seven-eighths of an inch, and without straps but with toes—could be got without coupons.

"I'll tell you what . . ." said the godmother, who was that kind of person, and before Cinderella could do anything about it this godmother person had shot out, and reappeared with old Aunt Mabel's wedding-dress from the attic, camphor-balls and all, and a pair of quite unrationed beach-sandals.

"And now, dear," she said, "you can go to the sherry party."

"What in?" Cinderella asked rather ungraciously.

"In old Aunt Mabel's wedding-dress and these beautiful beach-shoes, of course."

Cinderella explained that she hadn't so much meant that as what about petrol?

The godmother did *not* say, "I'll tell you what, I've got two petrol coupons I don't need"—thus making history.

She ignored the making of history altogether and said Cinderella could take her bicycle provided she got back well before lighting-up time, because the bicycle had (a) no lamps, (b) its lamps were out of order, (c) the battery had run down, (d) the red rear-light wouldn't work, (e) she didn't know that bicycles had to stop at a Halt sign—and Cinderella said halt was the word all right, and advised her godmother to keep all that for the magistrates.

So she went to the sherry party,

getting back just after black-out time and losing one of the heelless beach-shoes on the way, and being knocked up by the police as well to say that the light from the second-floor front window could be seen plainly from the air at a height of three thousand feet. It was therefore Cinderella, and not her godmother, who was summoned to the next Petty Sessions.

But the policeman had also brought the missing shoe, found and honourably taken to the police station by an R.A.F. man from the sherry party.

Her two sisters each tried to claim it, on the general principle of collecting

any unrationed bit of clothing, but Cinderella, being able to produce the second shoe, was naturally in the stronger position.

She then said that the thing to do, definitely, was to find this R.A.F. man and thank him, and she set out with that end in view—or anyway, it was one of the ends she had in view—but the whole squadron had, as so frequently happens, been moved in the night to the other end of England. And Cinderella couldn't help feeling that it had hardly been worth while, taking all that trouble to lose the shoe.

E. M. D.



Registration—Men 41



Registration—Women 23

Walks

IT is curious that hostesses are so apologetic when they suggest that Sunday afternoon should be spent sitting in the garden. They diffidently lead me to a shady copper beech, where there is an enchanting encampment of basket-work chairs of ancient design with bits to pull out to put your feet on, some dashing striped lie-lows, garden cushions, rugs, papers and books, saying: "I do hope you won't be dreadfully bored; I have some things to do indoors, but I'll join you later on." And they pop out anxiously from time to time during the afternoon to see how I am bearing up.

On the other hand, if the plan is a walk, no apology is considered. It is all quite easy. My taste is taken for granted and my opinion accepted.

"Shall we start about three?" they say glibly.

If I plead letters in my turn, they cry: "Oh, no, darling, don't waste the afternoon. Write in your room after tea." So all hope of the copper beech is off.

To begin with, by the time I have tracked down my thick pair of shoes to the slab outside the pantry, and extracted a stick from the umbrella-

stand (failing to notice at the time that it has a strange gimlet-like device on the end, which sinks into the ground at every step), the rest of the party are at the top of a steep rise. So I start at a disadvantage.

It is not often necessary, or even possible, to take an active part in the kind of conversation usual on walks, as I really have no theories as to what has happened to the hinge of that gate since last Sunday, nor if Farmer Snort's land ends before or after the main drain. As I have an inability to walk and talk at the same time, this suits me very well, and my mind is just atrophying nicely when I get an hysterical feeling that I am not pulling my weight, and start a string of semi-suitable questions, to which I am given patient answers. They are apt to take a line about me too, and one host very kindly tried to bring me into the conversation by calling over his shoulder: "Do you know, wheat's a shilling?"

Sometimes, too, I get separated from the others, and left in the company of some elderly and inarticulate gentleman, with whom in the ordinary course of events I should never have

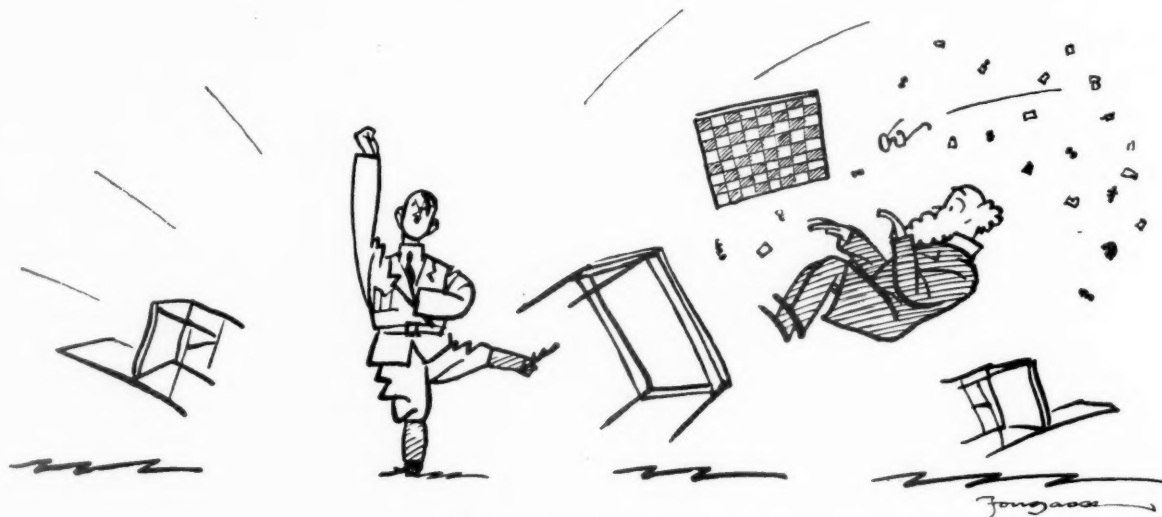
to cope, except between the soup and the fish, before the effects of the cocktails had worn off.

There is a moment when I find I am walking with my charming host, with the wind behind, and the field we are crossing grassy for once and sloping downhill. I have just got on to a lovely discussion about husbands, or modern architecture, when a glazed look comes into his eye, and "... Flash—Flash—Flash. ... Blast that dog. ... Into that cover again ... FLASH—FLASH." Even if we hadn't got to spend twenty minutes shouting, laughing, coaxing, admonishing, explaining, discussing, defending and beating, the golden thread of the conversation is lost for ever.

But I have found a reason for walks.

I know why they are so popular.

There's an unparalleled moment, when one has pushed one's stick back among the red cotton parasols, shooting-sticks and silver-knobbed canes, and is conscientiously scraping the sides of one's heels on the mat, when a faint and penetrating aroma reaches one's nose. Of China tea and toast. Of methylated spirits and mustard and cress. It is tea-time.



"My patience is exhausted!"

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